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THE HISTORICAL VALUE

OF THE

FIRST ELEVEN CHAPTERS OF GENESIS;

WITH SOME

DISCUSSION OF THE NEW CRITICISM.

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BY THE

REV. D. N. BEACH.

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HISTORICAL VALUE OF GENESIS I.-XI.

Howbeit the firm foundation of God standeth. — *2 Tim. ii. 19.*

THE HISTORICAL VALUE  
OF THE  
FIRST ELEVEN CHAPTERS OF GENESIS;  
WITH SOME  
DISCUSSION OF THE NEW CRITICISM.

BY THE  
REV. D. N. BEACH.

*WITH AN INTRODUCTION*

BY  
EDWIN B. WEBB, D.D.



BOSTON:  
Congregational Sunday-School and Publishing Society.  
1884.

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1884.

C. J. PETERS AND SON,  
STEREOTYPERS AND ELECTROTYPERS,  
145 HIGH ST.



HLR 28 N 42

To my Mother:

IN WHOSE PLAIN READING OF THE OLD TESTAMENT WERE A  
SPIRIT AND INSIGHT WHICH WENT FAR TO MAKE IT  
TO HER HOUSEHOLD, AS TO HERSELF,  
GOD'S WORD.

. . . It is greatly in favor of the Bible account that it has no philosophy, and no appearance of any philosophy, either in the abstract form, or in that earlier poetical form which the first philosophy assumed. Its statements of grand facts have no appearance of bias in favor of any class of ideas. Its great antiquity is beyond dispute: it is older, certainly, than history or philosophy. It was before the dawning of anything called science, as is shown by the fact that everything is denoted by its simplest phenomenal or optical name. There is no assigning of non-apparent causations, except the continual going forth of the mighty Word. It is impossible to discover any connection between it and any mythical poetry. The holy sublimity that pervades it is at war with the idea of direct and conscious forgery, designed to impose on others, and the thought of it as a mere work of genius, having its interest in a display of inventive and descriptive talent, is inconsistent with every notion we can form of the thinking and aims of that early youth of the human race. It was not the age then, nor till long after, of literary forgeries or fancy-tales. We are shut up to the conclusion of its subjective truthfulness, and its subjective authenticity. . . .

. . . This stands alone in the world, like the primeval granite of the Himalaya among the later geological formations. . . . — *Taylor Lewis.*

## PREFACE.

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THE matter hereinafter contained was read before the Woburn Association of Congregational Ministers, at their meeting in Boston, March 27, 1883. It was so favorably received, and so many wishes were expressed for its publication, that the author has been led to present it to the public in this form.

He does so not because it is new, or exhaustive, or an adequate handling of a great subject, but because it lays bare some of the roots of the present agitation respecting Old Testament criticism; and because it does this briefly and familiarly. It seems to have been in this particular that the paper served the ministers to whom it was first presented; and it is the author's hope that it may do as much for its lay readers.

He has amended it in some points, suggested — mainly — by the discussion which followed its reading. Beyond this nothing requires to be said, except on two points:

1. It is not intended, in the section on the Biblical account of the creation (§ 30), or by the quotation there introduced, to maintain the technical accuracy of that narrative; but its accuracy in the great characteristic features. And this, in accordance with that structural principle — as it may be called — of Scripture, about which something is said in an earlier section (§ 23, under Number 2).

2. The expression "New Criticism" is used in reference to the Old Testament, and in a sense clear enough, it is hoped, but somewhat difficult to define. (*a.*) There is a criticism of the Old Testament, "new," and thoroughly and fearlessly critical, which prosecutes its investigations, nevertheless, in the light of an authentic New Testament, and in

accordance with the presuppositions of historical Christianity. It thus occupies the true point of approach to the Old Testament, and is devoutly to be welcomed. (b.) The "New Criticism" here meant — though all of its adherents are not to be so characterized — does not occupy such a point of approach. It either denies miracles, or has no freeness of conception regarding them; and, having thus no fair hold upon even the New Testament, it passes to the Old, hopelessly prejudiced against the supernatural in it. And, not to give other illustrations, it has for one of its presuppositions an order of religious progress, from the beginning, analogous to that order which has obtained under Christianity, the order, namely, of *life*, then *form* (or training); instead of the Christian presupposition that, because of the "hardness" of the human heart, a formal training in religion necessarily preceded outbreking life — so preparing the way for the superabundant life with which, "when the fullness of the time came" (Gal. iv. 4), Christianity broke upon the world. (If it be urged in support of the former presupposition, that there were outbreakings of *life* early in the history — notably in Abraham's case; it is to be replied, not only that these outbreakings were sporadic, but that the Scriptures uniformly represent them as earnestings merely of what was by and by to obtain — Abraham the father of the faithful, and waiting long for progeny.) (c.) It may be remarked that, on the single presupposition instanced, the "reconstruction" of the Old Testament is a foregone conclusion — in fact, its inversion. If, then, this little book shall serve to emphasize the disagreement of so deep-seeing an historian as Ewald with the treatment which Hebrew history is at present undergoing at the dictation of this presupposition, one main purpose of its publication will be accomplished.

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*Bibliotheca Sacra*: "The Historic Character of the Pentateuch" (April, 1863; President Bartlett); "The First Eleven Chapters of Genesis Attested by their Contents" (July, 1865; Professor Hackett—from the German of Auberlen, with annotations); "The History of Research concerning the Structure of the Old Testament Historical Books" (Oct., 1880; July, 1882; Professor Duff); "Professor W. Robertson Smith and his Theories of Old Testament Criticism" (Jan., 1882; C. F. Thwing); "Professor W. Robertson Smith from a Conservative Stand-point" (April, 1882; Professor J. P. Taylor); "Proposed Reconstruction of the Pentateuch" (Jan., 1883; Professor Bissell).

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Lange on Genesis.

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Ewald's "History of Israel."

Stanley's "Lectures on the History of the Jewish Church."

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W. Robertson Smith's "Old Testament in the Jewish Church."

G. Smith's "Chaldean Account of Genesis."

Stebbins' "Study of the Pentateuch."

Geikie's "Hours with the Bible."

G. Rawlinson's Herodotus.

G. Rawlinson's "Manual of Ancient History."

Lenormant's "Beginnings of History."

Wright's "Studies in Science and Religion."

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DURING the fourteen months since the preparation of this volume, there have appeared—written from various points of view—the following articles: *Bibliotheca Sacra*: "Proposed Reconstruction of the Pentateuch," II. (April, 1883), III. (Oct., 1883), IV. (Jan., 1884; Professor Bissell); "On the Origin of the Primitive Historical Traditions of the Hebrews" (July, 1883; G. H. Whittmore—from the German of Dillmann); "A Symposium on the Antediluvian Narratives.—Lenormant, Delitzsch, Haupt, Dillmann" (July, 1883; Professor Curtiss); "Sketches of Pentateuch Criticism" (Jan., 1884; Professor Curtiss); "The Inspiration of the Old Testament" (April, 1884; I. P. Warren); Review of W. Robertson Smith's "Prophets of Israel" (April, 1884; Professor Dwinell). *Journal of Christian Philosophy*: "The Antiquity of Man Historically Considered" (April, 1883; G. Rawlinson); "The Mosaic Authorship of the Pentateuch" (Oct., 1883; Dean Payne-Smith); "The Historical Chapters of Daniel Attested by Contemporary Records" (Oct., 1883; W. H. Ward). *New Englander*: "The Present Outlook for Old Testament Study" (Sept., 1883; Professor Denio). *North American Review*: "Criticism and Christianity" (April, 1883; O. B. Frothingham); "Recent Criticisms of the Bible" (April, 1884; A. G. Mortimer, R. H. Newton). *Presbyterian Review*: "The Dogmatic Aspect of Pentateuchal Criticism" (April, 1883; Professor Patton). *Princeton Review*: "The Critical Study of the Scriptures" [with special reference to R. H. Newton's "Right and Wrong Uses of the Bible," and W. Robertson Smith's "Old Testament in the Jewish Church"] (Nov., 1883; F. A.



Henry). *Unitarian Review*: "The Hebrew Prophets," III. (April, 1883), IV. (Dec., 1883; Professor Stebbins); "Did Ezra Write or Amend Any Portion of the Pentateuch?" (Sept., 1883; Professor Stebbins); "Kuenen vs. Delitzsch" (Oct., 1883; J. Visser). *Universalist Quarterly*: "The Bible" (Oct., 1883; G. T. Flanders). — Also, the following books: *Bartlett* (President), "Sources of History in the Pentateuch"; *Briggs* (Professor), "Biblical Study: Its Principles, Methods, and History; together with a Catalogue of Books of Reference"; *Bush* (J. S.), "More Words about the Bible"; *Guyot* (Professor), "Creation, or the Bible Cosmogony in the Light of Modern Science"; *Howison* (R. R.), "God and Creation"; *McIlvaine* (J. H.), "The Wisdom of Holy Scripture, with Reference to Skeptical Objections"; *Newton* (R. H.), "The Right and Wrong Uses of the Bible"; also, "The Book of the Beginnings: a Study of Genesis; with an Introduction to the Pentateuch"; *Rawlinson* (G.), "The Early Prevalence of Monotheistic Beliefs"; *Savage* (M. J.), "Beliefs about the Bible"; *Toy* (Professor), "Quotations in the New Testament." To these should be added: *Boardman*, *Curtiss* and *Scott* (Professors), "Current Discussions in Theology" [in the annual volume for 1883, and in the same for 1884 — "Part I. — Exegetical Theology"]; *Fisher* (Professor), "The Grounds of Theistic and Christian Belief" [Chapters XII., XVII., XIX.]; and, *Green* (Professor), "Moses and the Prophets" [inexpensive edition of an important book which had been issued in more elaborate form late in 1882].

ON any view that does not pass the bounds of reason, "the law came by Moses." The recollection of the leadership of Moses, of his grand and dominating agency in the deliverance of the people from bondage, and in laying the foundations of their theocratic polity, was indelibly stamped upon the Hebrew mind. To discredit a tradition so deeply rooted in the generations that followed would be a folly of incredulity. It might almost be said that the voice of the great Lawgiver reverberates down the subsequent ages of Hebrew history, until the appearance of him whose teaching fulfilled, and in that sense superseded, the utterances of them "of old time." Ewald has dwelt impressively on the living memory, the memory of the heart, transmitted from father to son, of the great redemption from Egyptian slavery, — the standing type of the mighty spiritual deliverance to be achieved by a greater than Moses. If Moses was in reality so effective an agent in forming the Israelitish nation, and in shaping its peculiar system; if, in truth, so powerful an impulse emanated from him . . . , the question is naturally suggested, whether there would be wanting (since the art of writing was then well known) contemporary records, and something from the pen of Moses himself. If there is nothing improbable in the statement that he was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, then it is surely to be expected that he would, to some extent, have committed his laws and injunctions to writing. If so, it cannot be regarded as unlikely that what he thus composed constitute an important part, to say the least, of the materials of the Pentateuch. — *George P. Fisher.*

## INTRODUCTION.

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*Rev. D. N. Beach:*

MY DEAR BROTHER: To introduce your little book I am very happy. I wish I had a larger acquaintance that I might bespeak for it a wider reception. I wish also the book were bigger. You wish, no doubt, it were better. But a most timely, worthy little book it is: modest, comprehensive, compact and suggestive.

With the pleasure which I have in reading the book I feel that the author has written under the severest self-restraint. And hence I am tempted to say a few words in general on one point — on the testimony of Jesus Christ to the divine character and authority of the Old Testament.

In all matters of which he spoke Jesus Christ is supreme. The sinless one: the peerless one: the God-man: all are agreed in giving him the throne of their inmost confidence. When he speaks, doubt is settled; debate is ended. His word is final. From his verdict there is no appeal.

The attempt, sometimes made, to distinguish between the ethical and the historical in Christ's teachings cannot obtain. Such an attempt must end in attributing to him either deficiency in knowledge or defect in moral character. To introduce the knife of criticism here, between the written record and the spiritual doctrine, is more than to sever the thread of inspiration; it is to mangle the perfection of his peerless character and to introduce a blood poison into his whole system. It is to destroy the foundations of our confidence in him. It is to chill and cloud with painful uncertainty his solemn asseverations: "Verily, verily I say unto you."

Still further it is agreed that the Old Testament, substantially as we have it, existed at the time of Christ's coming. Wherever Jews settled, in country or city, they were found to possess a book, held to be of Divine origin and of peculiar character, recognized as sacred, and read every Sabbath day in the synagogues.

Copies of this Holy Book in different languages, and catalogues of the contents of it, — copies and catalogues made many generations before Jesus came, — have been wonderfully preserved and brought down to us, so that we know that our Old Testament is the book which

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Jesus studied and read and taught. Scholars tell us that the Samaritan Pentateuch is found, some say, seven hundred years before Christ. They also tell us that from the Maccabean persecution, nearly two hundred years before Christ, the Old Testament appears as a whole; and that the distinction of three parts, the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms, is readily traced back almost to the same date. This same division Jesus himself recognized when he addressed the disciples after his resurrection — “And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.”

The translators still at work on the revision of the Old Testament may find occasion, perhaps, to give a modified meaning to some words; to alter the arrangement of some narratives; to drop out some passages because they are not found in the earlier and original manuscripts, and to add some sentences, or parts of sentences because they are found there. Concede all this; the fact remains that prior to the Christian era the Jews had a book well defined as to its contents, peculiar in character, and sacred in their

esteem, a book substantially the same as our Old Testament.

With this book, let it be added now, with this book Jesus was perfectly familiar. For this book Jesus had unmistakable reverence. In the wilderness the tempter is rebuked at every assault by weapons drawn from the Pentateuch, — particularly from Deuteronomy. As President Woolsey says: "At the last supper, the words that institute the rite, take their coloring from certain most important passages in the prophets; his words of agony on the cross are in the language of the Twenty-second Psalm; and when the risen Lord appeared to his disciples 'He opened their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures.' And if we go back beyond the commencement of his public ministry, we find the only habit of life recorded of him to be that 'He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read.' Here, then, in this sequestered village, away from the emptiness of Pharisaical learning, and from Sadducean skepticism, he was reared on the divine word in its simplicity." President Woolsey adds for substance that God chose this simple method of placing Jesus alone with the ancient Scriptures, away from human teachers

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and comments, that he might partake of and pass down their permanent truth; that for the work of the Messiah which was before him his mind might be filled with the pure truth.

Now for the conclusion: perfectly familiar as he was with these ancient Scriptures, reared upon them, trained in them, did he indorse them? Did Jesus, whose distinguishing claim is that his words are true, who calls amid all the clamor of schools and sects and false teachers, upon the race of man, to look to him as *the truth*—did Jesus set his signature and the seal of his testimony to the truth of the Old Testament?

A few sentences from his own teachings answer this question beyond a doubt. In private and in public, on occasions the most momentous, and in circumstances the most trying and critical, Jesus appealed to and indorsed the writings of this Book.

To the lawyer he said: "What is written in the law? how readeest thou?"

In the parable, through the lips of Abraham, to the rich man pleading for instruction and testimony to be sent to his brethren while still in a state of probation, he says: "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them." Under circumstances more solemn, or in words more

decisive, could Jesus have indorsed Moses and the prophets? For our instruction; for our salvation they are enough.

Again Jesus says, and the new reading does not weaken the point, — "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."

And on the way to Emmaus, after his resurrection, to the two disciples he said: "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. . . . And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself."

To quote further seems needless. Jesus Christ, who came forth from the Father, believed the Old Testament Scriptures. Jesus Christ, who knows what is in man, referred to these Scriptures as supreme and sufficient. Jesus Christ, *the truth*, set the seal of his testimony to the truth of Moses, the prophets, and the Psalms. And *his word is supreme*.

E. B. WEBB.

Boston, May 28, 1884.



# HISTORICAL VALUE OF GENESIS I.-XI.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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Prove all things. — *1 Thess. v. 21.*

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§ 1. THESE chapters contain:

First, An account of the creation.

Second, An account of man's first condition, of his first sin, and of its immediate consequences.

Third, An account of the wickedness of the early descendants of man, of their consequent destruction by a flood, and of the preservation from the flood of the parents of a new race.

Fourth, An account of the ambitious spirit of the new race, and of the check put upon it by the confusion of tongues at Babel.

Considerable biographical matter is wrought into the narrative, and there are notices respecting geography, the arts, and the earliest literature ; but, particularly:

§ 1. *Contents  
of the chap-  
ters.*

## INTROD.

Fifth, An account is given of the origin and distribution of the earliest tribes and nations; and,

Sixth, The whole is put within definite time-limits by a chronology in genealogical form.

§ 2. *Limitation of the inquiry to the question of their historical trustworthiness.*

§ 2. The question is: What is the historical value of these chapters?

The expression "historical value" is used in two principal senses: first, as the equivalent of "historical trustworthiness;" and, secondly, as the equivalent of "historical importance." The justice of these two uses of the expression is obvious: for, though no historical matter is valuable except in so far as it is trustworthy, much historical matter of unquestionable trustworthiness is of no value because it is of no importance.

With regard to the historical value of these chapters in the second sense, it is clear that in so far as trustworthy they are of the highest historical importance, since they are occupied with the starting-points of history, and af-

ford a key to the most ultimate historical inquiries.

The present inquiry accordingly limits itself, at the outset, to the other principal sense in which the expression "historical value" is used, and becomes simply an examination into the historical trustworthiness—or authenticity—of these chapters.

§ 3. Considered abstractly, such an examination might show these chapters to be of absolute historical trustworthiness; or to be absolutely untrustworthy; or to be partly trustworthy and partly not; and the result of the examination ought to show the first, or the second, or else to constitute a bill of particulars wherein the chapters are trustworthy and wherein not.

1. But, if the chapters were shown to be absolutely untrustworthy as history, it would not follow that they were ethically untrustworthy: they might be shown to contain the most weighty ethical truths. Nor would it follow that they were untrustworthy as sym-

INTROD.

§ 3. *Possible range of the answer.*

1. *Less at stake than might appear. Consequent fearlessness with which the inquiry should be undertaken.*

INTROD.  

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bols of historical truth: they might constitute, as it were, the algebraic notation of historical verities only to be read at their exact value on some higher plane of human intelligence. For these reasons no one should shrink from eying most critically these beginnings of Revelation, and from giving candid consideration to the new treatment to which they are subjected by the historical methods of our time.

2. *The inquiry should be pursued in a historical rather than dogmatic spirit.*

2. Again, the inquiry may be pursued — as, indeed, the case requires — in a historical rather than in a dogmatic spirit. The dogmatic spirit, properly guarded, must attend inquiries concerning principles, inasmuch as principles are so intimately related that one often involves another, and that many principles which offer themselves, and which are plausible enough by themselves, require to be rejected because destructive of known principles. But events — into which it is the province of history to inquire — do not have the same solidarity of relation; and, accordingly,

are to be judged more independently — that is, not dogmatically, but historically.

§ 4. Though the present inquiry is limited to the question of historical trustworthiness, the possible range of the answer — as outlined above — renders it obvious that little more can be done in this essay than cursorily to glance at a few of the more salient points. It is proposed to do this according to the following plan:

Inasmuch as the inquiry turns in part upon the question of the origin of the Pentateuch, some of the more recent views on that subject will first be sketched, and some judgment expressed respecting them. This will constitute Part I. of the essay.

The question of the historical trustworthiness — or authenticity — of the chapters under inquiry will next be taken up: 1. As matter of testimony, from their treatment by secular historians; 2. As matter of fact, by external tests; 3. As matter of inference, from internal evi-

#### INTROD.

§ 4. *Cursory treatment of the inquiry necessary.*

*Its plan.*

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INTROD.

dence; and, 4, As matter of testimony, from him, and from the duly accredited representatives of him, who said: "Before Abraham was, I am" (John viii. 58). This will constitute Part II. of the essay.

## PART I.—ORIGIN OF THE PENTATEUCH.

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### WHENCE :

The law was given by Moses. — *John i. 17.*

### WHAT :

The law hath been our tutor. — *Gal. iii. 24.*

### IN WHAT ORDER :

Beginning from Moses and from all the prophets. —  
*Luke xxiv. 27.*

### How :

No prophecy ever came by the will of man : but men spake  
from God, being moved by the Holy Ghost. — *2 Pet. i. 21.*

---

## I. SOME RECENT VIEWS.

### 1. *Ewald.*

§ 5. EWALD — late Professor at Göttingen — notes as a peculiarity of Hebrew historical literature, its amplitude — besides the extant documents many others referred to, and probably yet many others which failed to receive mention. Partly owing to this amplitude, and partly by reason of the habit of the Hebrew historians to write anonymously, he maintains that there grew up among them an art of “book-

## PART I.

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§ 5. *Amplitude of Hebrew historical literature.*  
“*Book-compounding.*”  
*Grouping of Hebrew historical remains with this in mind.*

## PART I.

compounding," as well as of book-making; indeed, that the exigencies of Hebrew historical literature demanded and justified such an art. Consequently the present remains of Hebrew historical literature must be received with this fact in mind. So receiving them, and subjecting them to close scrutiny, he finds that they group themselves into three classes: 1. Those devoted to the antiquity of the nation; 2. Those devoted to its middle history, first under judges, then under kings; and, 3. Those devoted to its later history.

§ 6. *First group ("antiquity of the nation")—the Pentateuch and Book of Joshua.*

*Contains fragments of:*

§ 6. To the first group belong the Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua. This group, as the oldest, must have been the oftenest worked over. Searched for fragments of the most ancient books, a considerable number are discovered. They are marked by archaic forms; have no coloring of legislative or of prophetic import, such as later compositions manifest; are concise, simple, truly antique. When analyzed and grouped these fragments suggest three



ancient, purely historical works, which may be called: The "Book of the Wars of Jehovah" (Num. xxi. 14); The "Biography of Moses;" and, The "Book of Covenants."

1. The first of these, and the simplest in style, celebrated the victories under Moses and Joshua, and must have been of nearly contemporaneous origin.

2. The second of these, from its more finished style, seems to have had a somewhat later origin, and to have worked up the principal memories respecting Moses. Of it still fewer fragments remain.

3. The third of these, the "Book of Covenants," of which there are more numerous remains, was devoted to the various covenants which had been made between distinguished individuals, as Jacob and Laban, or which Jehovah had made with the nation. It is believed to have been composed in the unsettled times under the Judges, when there began to be developed that spirit

PART I.

1. "*Book of the Wars of Jehovah*" (nearly contemporary with the victories under Moses and Joshua);

2. "*Biography of Moses*" (somewhat later);

3. "*Book of Covenants*" (troubled times under the Judges).

## PART I.

§ 7. "*Book of Origins*" (nearly contemporary with the completion of Solomon's Temple).

*Hebrew history now first treated comprehensively, and in its relations to general history as viewed by the Hebrews.*

of turning to the Lord, and of re-entering a covenant relation with him, which at length produced Samuel and David.

§ 7. Out of such a spirit arose the Hebrew monarchy, and flowered into its golden age almost at once under David and Solomon. In the still present glory of that age, out of the priestly class which Temple and ritual exalted, arose the historian who first brought together into a compact work an account of the "antiquity of the nation," which may be styled the "*Book of Origins*" ("generations;" Gen. ii. 4; v. 1; etc.).

It was the true period for the production of a great historical work — just as Herodotus and Thucydides arose in Greece, after the victories over the Persians. The work was of that age, as evinced by the "glances that it casts upon its own times in the midst of an exhibition of the patriarchal world;" as evinced by half-envious acknowledgments that other nations possessed kings "before there reigned any king over the children of Israel" (Gen.

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PART I.

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xxxvi. 31); and as evinced by a fragment of this writer found in 1 Kings. His "chief aim was unmistakably to survey from the resting-place which that epoch had reached, the entire mass of historical matter in its greatest extent, and to trace it back up to the ultimate commencement of all creation." He embraced the favorite idea of the cultivated nations, which casts the history of mankind into four ages — the latest, with this writer, the present age; the next earlier, that of the patriarchs; the next two, the time preceding the patriarchs, marked off into two parts by the deluge. As, however, this writer could not but admit that his nation had only lately achieved eminence, he was led "to show from the store of ancient tradition how Israel, although so recent a community, had yet been separated from all other nations, and become dominant over many in fulfillment of its high destiny." Not only did Hebrew tradition assist him, but his acquaintance with other nations through

PART I.  
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the victories of David. According to his plan he disposed of nation after nation, and of family after family, which did not lead down to Israel — Japheth and Ham left to take up Shem; Terah's descendants left to take up Abraham's; Esau's, to take up Jacob's. In accordance with his priestly lineage, and with the hold which the newly erected Temple had upon the popular mind, he expanded ritual legislation so as to constitute a large portion of his work; but showed his real greatness by making that only central to a greater whole. To him everything was hopeful. With exuberant sympathy, and yet with true art, he threw himself into harmony with the several ages which he depicted, and suited his style — even in minute archaic particulars — to the requirements of each age. "Lofty spirit!" exclaims Ewald; "thou whose work has for centuries not unnaturally" been "taken for that of thy great hero Moses himself, I know not thy name, and divine only from thy vestiges when

thou didst live, and what thou didst achieve: but if these thy traces incontrovertibly forbid me to identify thee with him who was greater than thou, and whom thou thyself only desirest to magnify according to his deserts, then see that there is no guile in me, nor any pleasure in knowing thee not absolutely as thou wert!"

§ 8. This was the unsurpassed work on the earlier Hebrew history. But it was several times recast: partly, because its judicious writer had not exhausted the store of ancient historical material; partly, because of the existence of diverse traditions in different parts of the country; and, partly, because of additions to the stock of legend and story which further intercourse with foreign nations introduced. Moreover, successive periods saw the history in successive lights, and had successive purposes in view in writing history. Not to go, then, into much detail further:

1. A Third Narrator (counting the preceding as second, and the authors of

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§ 8. "*Prophetical Narrators of the Primitive History:*"

1. "*Third*"  
Narrator  
(*nearly con-*

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temporary  
with *Elijah*)—  
prophetic ad-  
ditions;

the three ancient works as first), who belonged to about the period of *Elijah*, and was marked by the prophetic rather than by the legislative spirit, made several characteristic additions to the "Book of Origins," which may be detected by their style.

2. "Fourth"  
Narrator  
(somewhat  
later)—inde-  
pendent work,  
freely treating  
the history in  
accordance  
with *Messi-  
anic hopes*;

2. A Fourth Narrator, somewhat later, in whom the prophetic spirit culminated, constructed an independent work, characterized by a free and poetical use of the history to suit his purpose. He sought to work into the primitive history, supports for Messianic hopes; shaped the history so as to show more clearly the necessary overthrow of every unrighteous power; and, through the ethical purpose of his work, tended to lose sight of the distinctive characteristics of the several ancient periods.

3. "Fifth"  
Narrator  
(nearly con-  
temporary  
with *Joel*)—  
compilation  
abridging  
contempora-  
neous histori-

3. A Fifth Narrator, of about the time of the prophet *Joel*, finding contemporaneous historical literature swollen to great bulk, next recast the history into substantially the form of the greater part of the present Pentateuch. He

made use of a variety of authorities, but principally of the foregoing works. The prophetic spirit and tone marked him, but he considerably repressed the Messianic element, and made more of faith victorious through trial. A soured spirit toward surrounding nations appeared in him — a reflex of the times. His style showed deterioration from that of his predecessors. To his abridgments are due a variety of breaks now to be found in the narrative. In the process of epitomizing he disregarded minor contradictions which might appear in the completed work.

Inasmuch as under these writers the legislative spirit of the "Book of Origins" was succeeded by the prophetic, they may be distinguished as "the Prophetical Narrators of the primitive history."

§ 9. The greater part of the Pentateuch having now reached substantially its final shape, it served the purpose of some well-wisher of his nation to address his countrymen, amidst their

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*cal material to substantially the form of the greater part of the present Pentateuch, and considerably repressing the Messianic element.*

§ 9. "The Deuteronomist" (latter half of Manasseh's reign) — *patriotic address to the nation, under*

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*Moses' name (Deuteronomy), supplemented by a recast of the life of Joshua to suit the address (Book of Joshua). This the book discovered in the Temple, under Josiah.*

accumulating misfortunes, with a view to a renewed and reformed national life. He did so by supposing Moses—no longer at the distance of a legislator, speaking in set phrase, but as a familiar orator among the people—to recast the Law, and to mingle with it bright promises and pointed threats. But as this would constitute theory and exhortation only, he supplemented this part of his work by recasting the life of Joshua, and by representing him as successfully carrying out the new order of things in the early history. Hence, substantially the present Deuteronomy and Book of Joshua—the former largely fresh matter, the latter the old history worked over to suit the purpose in hand. The writer may be called “the Deuteronomist.” He did not write fraudulently, but prepared an ethical treatise in historical form. He would seem to have resided in Egypt, and to have written in the latter half of King Manasseh’s reign. It was a stray copy of his book, somehow brought, years



before, into Palestine, and to the Temple, which was discovered there under the good King Josiah (2 Kings xxii.; 2 Chron. xxxiv.).

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§ 10. The powerful effect which the discovery of this book produced (2 Kings xxiii.; 2 Chron. xxxiv., xxxv.) gave it great distinction. With slight additional matter, of a similar stamp, it was joined on to the compilation of the Fifth Narrator, and became, with that, the present Pentateuch and Book of Joshua — the whole undergoing, however, trifling editorial modifications later. As the compactest work on the ancient history, and as a work a portion of which had been of great historical service, this composite document was preserved, was revered more and more, and became at length the most sacred Hebrew book.

§ 10. *The work of the "Fifth" Narrator and of the Deuteronomist soon combined, and at length revered, as the present Pentateuch and Book of Joshua. From them "still shines forth very much that is original."*

"In conclusion," remarks Ewald, "we can now understand what extraordinary fortunes this great work underwent, before it attained its present form. . . .

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§ 11. *Ewald's*  
*point of view*  
*historical.*  
*Characteriza-*  
*tion of him.*

From amid the wreck of the oldest writings and the multitude of later additions, there still shines forth very much that is original."

§ 11. Ewald's point of view is that of an historical critic. He is hardly theological at all. He is characterized by great and comprehensive learning; by remarkable powers of analysis and of generalization; and above all by a singular talent for actualizing past events. Even in the dry, critical parts of his history, he often quickens one's blood by his life-like touches. Few men have put Biblical scholarship under greater obligations to them. Those scholars who least agree with him continually quote or allude to him. Few, however, follow him. Canon Westcott—not too conservative himself—says of him, in another connection: "Ewald, according to his usual custom, picks out the different elements with a daring confidence, and leaves a result so complicated that no one can accept it in its details, while it is characterized in its

great features by masterly judgment and sagacity."

## 2. *Kuenen.*

§ 12. Kuenen—Professor at Leyden, and representative of a considerable school of Dutch Biblical critics — occupies a theological point of view, but only in the broadest sense. He examines the religion of the Hebrews as simply one of "the principal religions." It "is one of these religions, nothing less, but also nothing more." "Moses bequeathed no book of the Law to the tribes of Israel. Certainly, nothing more was committed to writing by him, or in his time, than 'the Ten Words' [Commandments] in their original form." "The first four books of the Pentateuch are more recent than the seventh century before our era;" and, accordingly, since King Josiah died within the seventh century, are more recent than the book found during his reign. That book was substantially Deuteronomy. It was — as in Ewald's

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§ 12. *Kuenen's point of view theological in an unevangelical sense. The Pentateuch neither of the Mosaic age, nor a repository of much trustworthy historical matter.*

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view — a new work; but it was imposed upon the king — contrary to Ewald, who says: "The want of historical conscientiousness cannot be more painfully displayed than in suppositions like this." Under Ezra, "priestly ordinances were made known and imposed upon the Jewish nation now for the first time." The writer's method of arriving at his conclusions is less historical than Ewald's. Indeed, it is dogmatic, with the above view respecting "the principal religions" as the point of departure. By consequence, unlike Ewald, he finds little trustworthy historical matter in the Pentateuch.

3. *Graf and his School.*

§ 13. *The point of view of Graf's school, theological in a more evangelical sense. Its practical conclusions hardly less radical.*

§ 13. In Germany a somewhat healthier theological point of view is occupied by a school of sufficiently radical Old Testament critics. The results reached by this school are frequently as startling as in the case of Ewald, or of Kuenen; but they are reached in a more evan-

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gelical spirit. This school may be said to have taken definite rise from about 1866, when Graf—Professor at Meissen, in Saxony—published an essay entitled, “The Historical Books of the Old Testament: Two Historical Examinations.” The idea of mere historical development, or of mere religious development (in Kuenen’s sense), was abandoned for confidence in a divine hand underneath the history and underneath the religion. Nevertheless, the divine hand operated under historical conditions, and a devout criticism of the Old Testament books must therefore be undertaken. In his treatment of the Pentateuch, Graf entered upon a minute comparison of it, part with part, and by topics, and arrived at conclusions in keeping with his eloquent theory, that “the Church of the Old Covenant, like the Church of the New, was not founded by a written document. The old Church had its origin, like the new, in the living word of revelation by prophets.”

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§ 14. *W. Robertson Smith a propagandist of the foregoing school.*

4. *W. Robertson Smith.*

§ 14. Having noted in this school a movement, rather than its details, it will be profitable to consider briefly the views of that one of its members who is now most before the public eye in Great Britain and America.

The spirit of W. Robertson Smith — lately Professor at Aberdeen — is, to a good degree, evangelical, and he is intensely in earnest. Always presupposing these traits, he is an enthusiastic and fascinating propagandist of what may be called Graf's school. According to him, the view that the Pentateuch is substantially of Mosaic origin, requires to be tested by the subsequent history. The Pentateuch certainly goes back to Ezra's time: what light is shed upon its origin by the history between Moses and Ezra?

1. *Legislation of the Pentateuch not enforced before Ezekiel.*

1. In the first place, the legislation of the Pentateuch was never enforced during that period. Even the successive reformers of the people failed to

comply with it. So pure a character as Samuel had no scruple about sacrificing on high places, contrary to it. "From the Judges to Ezekiel, the Law in its finished system and fundamental theories was never the rule of Israel's worship." True, the principal portions of the history are represented as a record of lapses from Jehovah, but the lapses were not lapses from such legislation as that of the Pentateuch.

2. Again, during that period it was not rites and ceremonies — as after the Captivity — which gave a distinct life to the nation, but the living voice of prophets. It was their glory to speak Jehovah's word. It was the people's glory that they possessed prophets. The prophets spake only, and wrote not, until the wicked nation would no longer listen; then they wrote. Moreover, the prophetic idea of forgiveness was direct; not by process of ritual. Hence, since prophecy did not supersede ritual, ritual must have come in only in the last days of prophecy. "The conclusion is in-

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2. *From prophecy to ritual, the order of the Hebrew national life.*

## PART I.

3. *The Pentateuch not of the Mosaic age; its constituent parts; its historical portions composed in part from ancient documents.*

evitable, that the ritual element . . . became part of the system of God's grace only after the prophets had spoken."

Thus radically divergent from Ewald's, is this school's sense of the historical order. (See § 8, above, at the end.)

3. Once more, the Pentateuch is found to accord with these judgments. It has a kernel of ancient legislation — principally Ex. xxi.-xxiii. It has the Deuteronomic code — principally Deut. xii.-xxvi. — of about Josiah's time. It has an extended priestly code, of the age of the Captivity — foreshadowed by Ezekiel in connection with his vision of a new Temple. Its historical portions were composed in Palestine — quite possibly as late as David's period — in part from documents more or less ancient.

"These results," remarks the writer when he has prepared the way for the conclusions just summarized, "have a much larger interest than the question of the date of the Pentateuch. It



is more important to understand the method of God's grace in Israel than to settle when a particular book was written."

## II. REMARKS UPON THE FOREGOING VIEWS.

### *First Remark.*

§ 15. The above views — so diverse in themselves — start from a common assumption, and arrive at a common result.

The assumption from which they start is, that the Hebrew national life developed in accordance with the same general principles that have operated in other history.

The result at which they arrive is, that the Pentateuch was the outgrowth of the Hebrew national life, not its starting-point.

Vatke put the assumption and the result concretely eight-and-forty years ago, when he said: "Leviticus must

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§ 15. *Their common assumption — development of the Hebrew national life according to ordinary historical principles. Their common result — the Pentateuch the outgrowth, not the starting-point, of the Hebrew national life.*

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have followed Isaiah, for sacerdotalism always follows faith."

*Second Remark.*

§ 16. *Their  
wide prevalence.*

§ 16. With regard to the extent to which these views prevail, W. Robertson Smith affirms that their more evangelical type represents "the growing conviction of an overwhelming weight of the most eminent and sober scholarship." Professor Bissell, of Hartford, who has lately been in Germany, would materially qualify this statement; but has "no doubt that a large majority of the younger theologians of Germany have really adopted" similar views, "and find in them a happy solution of many perplexing critical problems." It is significant, from an Anglo-American point of view, that a fund has been enthusiastically raised in Scotland from which to support the unseated Aberdeen Professor in his studies and public expositions, and that he edits the more important Old Testament matter in the

ninth edition of the Encyclopædia Britannica.

*Third Remark.*

§ 17. It should be remarked, also, that the same principles of criticism which appear in these views, are applied to the entire Old Testament. Indeed, it is largely through handling the Old Testament in such a manner, that the conclusions respecting the Pentateuch are reached. As, however, the Pentateuch is the stem out of which the Old Testament seems to grow (and, in truth, the New), the New Criticism reaches its culmination in "reconstructing" that document.

*Fourth Remark.*

§ 18. The bearing of these views upon the question in hand — viz., the historical trustworthiness of Genesis i.-xi. — is obvious:

It is in the light of such views that the question has presented itself at this time.

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§ 17. *The entire Old Testament involved in them.*

§ 18. *Their necessary connection with the present inquiry.*

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Also, such views, while they differ in their estimate of the chapters under consideration, agree in removing that very considerable voucher for the trustworthiness of the chapters—a substantially Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch.

Furthermore, unless these chapters have been misconceived, they are the tap-root of the Pentateuch. Ewald, with true historical insight, makes them such in the case of his “Book of Origins” (§ 7, above). A cavalier disposal of them, therefore, through making the Pentateuch the outgrowth, not the starting-point, of the Hebrew national life, challenges attention in this inquiry. It may be that Genesis i.-xi. and the Pentateuch stand in relations which cannot be broken; and that Genesis i.-xi. will yet break the New Criticism. (See § 43, below.)

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III. GROUNDS OF DISSENT FROM  
THE FOREGOING VIEWS.1. *General Grounds.*

§ 19. Respecting the common result of the foregoing views — viz., the conclusion that the Pentateuch was the outgrowth of the Hebrew national life, not its starting-point — it is to be observed:

§ 19. *Their conclusion:*

1. First, that the conclusion is not proved. As the advocates of an unbroken evolution of man from the lowest forms of life, have entered upon elaborate studies, and have laid science under large obligations to their researches; so have these schools of criticism brought great learning and ingenuity to bear upon the Old Testament documents, with many valuable results. But just as there are many fatal breaks, as yet, in the proof of a complete evolution, so are there many breaks here.

1. *Not proved.*

Ewald's account of the origin of the Pentateuch, though instinct with his-

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torical acumen, has never been regarded as proved.

The Dutch critics make assumptions which are too large, and pass to conclusions too lightly.

The school of which W. Robertson Smith is the exponent rests its case, first, on an attempted proof that the legislation of the Pentateuch was not enforced between Moses and Ezekiel: whereas, if it were not, that fact would no more show that those ages had not the Pentateuch, than the want of conformity of the Christian Church to the Gospel, between the sixth and the sixteenth centuries, would show that the Church had not the writings of the Evangelists. This school rests its case, secondly, on an attempted proof that the order of the Hebrew national life was from prophecy to ritual, and not *vice versa*: whereas Ewald, who arrives at this school's general conclusion, is unable with his great historical insight to find that such was the fact. This school rests its case, thirdly, upon an analysis

of the Pentateuch—which, considering the convulsion which the divine plan for Israel seems to have suffered in the Wilderness of the Wandering, affords a narrow margin for argument, much less for proof.

2. It is to be observed, also, that the different laborers and schools of labor along the line of these views, have reached as yet no detailed agreement. They start with a common assumption; they arrive at a common conclusion; but they disagree all along the way. “Not even so” does “their witness agree together” (Mark xiv. 59). But it must reach some agreement before it can carry conviction. For example, the radical divergence between Ewald, and Graf’s school, already noted.

3. It is to be observed, moreover, that these views raise more difficulties than they solve. It is harder to believe in the “reconstructed” Pentateuch than in the Pentateuch as it stands. The sanguine man of Aberdeen leads you confidently along, pointing out how in

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2. *Their conclusion arrived at without detailed agreement.*

3. *More difficulties raised by it than settled.*

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4. *The naturalistic plane reached in arriving at it, itself a difficulty.*

his path you escape this difficult hill, and that too narrow causeway, but he leaves you in a bog.

4. One difficulty these views seem to escape. By their common assumption — viz., ordinary historical development — they seem to make the whole history natural. The mystery — the struggle to come to the birth — is gone out of it. And particularly when you have traced with Ewald “what extraordinary fortunes this great work underwent,” you seem to have got a key to Hebrew history made easy. But this escape really involves you in a more serious trouble: for, turn the history over and over as you will, you cannot help feeling that its peculiarity lies precisely in its difficulty; that, emptied of difficulty it becomes commonplace; that, in point of fact, what occurred was not a natural history at all.

On these general grounds, were there nothing further to be said, it would seem that these views must fail to command assent.



## 2. *Particular Grounds.*

§ 20. But there is much more to be said:

1. There is a strong line of testimony out of the Old Testament books, tracing the Pentateuch of Ezra's time back to the time of Moses — a line of testimony often challenged, but not yet discredited.

2. Also, there is strong internal evidence assigning the Pentateuch to the Mosaic age: its archaic words and modes of expression; the accuracy of its numerous Egyptian allusions; the nice correspondence of its appropriate portions to the wilderness life; its amplitude of detail — such a characteristic of authentic writing; its simplicity, fidelity to human nature, and impartiality — as of an original record.

Both these points have been developed with some fullness, and in popular form, in Dr. Stebbins' recent "Study of the Pentateuch." They might, how-

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§ 20. *The Pentateuch of substantially Mosaic origin:*

1. *As shown by a strong line of Old Testament testimony;*

2. *As shown by strong internal evidence;*

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3. *As shown  
by profuse  
New Testa-  
ment testi-  
mony.*

ever, be put more completely and effectively.

3. Moreover, there is profuse testimony in the New Testament — in part authenticating the Pentateuch, in part assigning it in general terms to Moses. For a single example, Christ most explicitly says: "If ye believed Moses, ye would believe me; for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" (John v. 46, 47.) But such testimony must be disallowed, according to Kuenen, who says: "We must either cast aside as worthless our dearly bought scientific method, or must for ever cease to acknowledge the authority of the New Testament in the domain of the exegesis of the Old." (See § 41, below.)

On these particular grounds it would seem that the foregoing views must be dissented from.

### 3. *Grounds in the Nature of the Case.*

§ 21. *More-  
over:*

1. *The as-*

§ 21. But further still:

1. The assumption with which these

views start (§ 15, above) — viz., that the Hebrew national life developed in accordance with the same general principles which have operated in other history — is incorrect, if Christianity is a supernatural religion; and if, being such, "salvation is from the Jews" (John iv. 22).

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*sumption—development of the Hebrew national life according to ordinary historical principles—incorrect;*

2. Also, taken all in all, the Pentateuch is the masterpiece of Hebrew literature. But masterpieces of literature have authors. Ewald with his usual penetration recognizes this, and in creating and apostrophizing the author of his "Book of Origins" (§ 7, above, at the end), does what little he can toward supplying one. But none of the foregoing views supplies one. And in denying to the master mind of Hebrew history the substantial authorship of the masterpiece of Hebrew literature, these views leave that masterpiece not adequately accounted for.

*2. No adequate authorship of the Pentateuch found;*

3. Moreover, Hebrew history is the masterpiece of ancient history. It, too, requires to be accounted for. With the

*3. Hebrew history not adequately accounted for;*

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4. *The great moral traits of the Jews—the point of departure for Christianity—rooted in a misapprehension or in a fraud, which unhistorical and unpsychological.*

Pentateuch as its starting-point, all is explained. With the Pentateuch as its outgrowth, it is left like a majestic tree without roots.

4. Once more, these views require the belief that the great and distinctive moral traits of the Jews, on which Christianity was engrafted, took their rise in a misapprehension of facts, if not in a fraud. For it was the firm conviction of the Jews for centuries before Christ, that the system of the Pentateuch came direct from God to Moses; and it was that living conviction which produced a Simeon, a John the Baptist, a Paul—which, in short, made it possible to plant Christianity in the world. But that conviction, according to these views, was a mistake. And it was a mistake due either to a misapprehension or to a fraud, mysteriously connected with somebody between Hilkiah and Ezra.

But to ground such a conviction, and a conviction producing such results, in misapprehension or in fraud—which

is thus what these views require — is consistent neither with sound history nor with sound psychology. If, then, it is not true that "the law was given by Moses," that which "came by Jesus Christ" was neither "grace" nor "truth" (John i. 17).

On these grounds, involved in the very nature of the case, in addition to the general and to the particular grounds previously considered, it would seem that the foregoing views must be rejected.

## PART II. — AUTHENTICITY OF CHAPTERS I.-XI.

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1.

By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God. — *Heb. xi. 3.*

2.

Through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin. — *Rom. v. 12.*

3.

The flood came, and destroyed them all. — *Luke xvii. 27.*

4.

(a.) Nothing will be restrained from them. . . . Let us go down, and there confound their language. — *Gen. xi. 6, 7.*

(b.) They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues. — *Acts ii. 4.*

5.

He made of one every nation of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, having determined . . . the bounds of their habitation. — *Acts xvii. 26.*

6.

Jesus . . . the son of Abraham, . . . the son of Noah, . . . the son of Adam, the son of God. — *Luke iii. 23-38.*

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### PART II.

§ 22. *Recapitulation.*

### PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.

§ 22. SOME of the principal views which controvert the substantially Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch having now been examined in a spirit of candor, and as comprehensively as the

present discussion will admit, and a variety of grounds having been found on which these views must be rejected — the specific question proposed (§ 2, above) — viz., the historical trustworthiness, or authenticity, of Genesis i.-xi. — is next in order.

§ 23. It must be stated at the outset in what sense the expression, "historical trustworthiness, or authenticity," is here used. It is used in the same sense that would be employed were it used of any history — a history of the rise of New England Congregationalism, for example. The question is: Are the contents of Genesis i.-xi. historically trustworthy, or authentic? That is: Do they accurately record what occurred in all the matters with which they deal? It is right, however, to make the following qualifications:

1. History has come to have a new sense amidst the prodigious historical labors of recent times. In the new sense it is, perhaps, equivalent to what has been termed "philosophical history."

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§ 23. By "authenticity of the chapters," meant — an accurate record of what occurred in all the matters described.  
But:

1. *Philosophical history* not meant;

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According to this sense, records, annals, monographs, are not history; they are — no matter how trustworthy — only the materials out of which to construct history. Obviously Genesis i.-xi. is not history in this sense.

2. *Nor technical accuracy;*

2. Again, every department of knowledge has come to be thought of as the proper subject of a history all its own. There is cosmological history; there is ethnological history; there is the history of language; etc. Such history, properly written, is technical. But obviously, in so far as the contents of Genesis i.-xi. might properly fall under such departments of history, they are not technical. In their specifications respecting the successive orders of life which appeared upon the earth, for example, technical accuracy in details ought not to be expected; inasmuch as the account is not of vegetation and of animal life as they would be thought of by the botanist or by the zoologist, but of vegetation and of animal life as they would be thought of by



the ordinarily intelligent man. Accordingly this canon — viz., accuracy as apprehended by the ordinarily intelligent man, rather than technical accuracy — is assumed as the test of authenticity whenever such a distinction is of reasonable application in these chapters.

3. Also, this requirement in constructing the narrative — viz., capability of apprehension by the ordinarily intelligent man — must have laid some conditions upon the narrative. It was not to be expected, for example, that the narrative should use the expression "creative period," when the flexible word "day" would so much more simply and effectively serve men who, from want of experience of duration, had as yet no proper sense of time. Nor was it to be expected, for another example, that that occult fact — a certain sex subordination — should be told in the precise terms of its institution to him who, after a sleep that exceeded nature, looked first upon one whom he could not help recognizing as bone of

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3. *Nor precise terms (as "creative period"), when general terms (as "day") more suitable;*

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his bones, and flesh of his flesh. This second characteristic, then — viz., the substitution of general for precise terms (sometimes in single words; sometimes, perhaps, in entire paragraphs) by reason of the conditions which capability of apprehension by the ordinarily intelligent man laid upon the narrative — is assumed not to discredit the authenticity of these chapters.

4. *Nor exemption from incidental inaccuracies.*

4. Once more, those incidental inaccuracies to which all history is liable, and from which even inspired history seems not to be exempt, are not regarded as vitiating the authenticity of these chapters. For example, Luke's record of the patriarchal line from Abraham to Adam, inserts one name — Cainan, between Shelah and Arphaxad (Luke iii. 36; compare Gen. x. 24, xi. 12) — not found in these chapters; and in this respect either his copy of these chapters must have been inaccurate, or ours is — ours of them or of him.

§ 24. *By "authenticity of the chap-*

§ 24. There is a way of looking at these chapters not admissible under the

expression "historical trustworthiness, or authenticity," as here used — viz., the allegorical. And some, who would not like to say that these chapters are not historically trustworthy, seriously inquire: "Historically trustworthy, no doubt: but how? allegorically?"

It is not the present purpose to controvert such a method of understanding these chapters; though the unreasonableness of it will be suggested later (§ 42, below). Nor would a part of what is about to be adduced in proof of the authenticity of these chapters, altogether lose force upon such an understanding of them. But clearly, in so far as these chapters are allegorical, they are not true history. They stand for that, perhaps; but they are not that. And they are valuable, perhaps, ethically, or symbolically, according to the possibility intimated earlier (§ 3, above, under Number 1); but they are not valuable as true history. On this ground, the expression "historical trustworthiness, or authenticity," as used in

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*ters," allegory  
excluded.*

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this inquiry, excludes — as stated — the allegorical view.

But it may be asked: "Wherein does the above qualification [§ 23, under Number 3] about 'the substitution of general for precise terms' — as in the use of 'day' for 'creative period'; or, as in the account of the creation of woman — differ from the allegorical view?" The answer is, that there is no difference in point of quality; but that, in point of extent and of bearing, the difference is radical. Figure, symbol, allegory, enter more or less into all language. When, then, such an element enters in part into a narrative, it does not obscure the substantial fact of the narrative; and it is only in such an application that the above qualification is intended. But when figure, symbol, allegory, usurp all — so that, for example, what is narrated is entirely allegory — the fact of the narrative is hid; and there is left only a symbol for the history, not the history itself.

planation of terms to the question in hand, it should be observed that, in the substantially Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch — for a belief in which, as shown, there are ample grounds — these its introductory chapters receive strong confirmation. Derived in part from ancient documents or from oral tradition though they seem to have been, they were not incorporated into the Pentateuch without first passing the scrutiny of a great mind and of a highly cultivated mind; nor without first passing also the higher scrutiny of that divine Oracle which, about a far less important matter, said: "And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was showed thee in the mount" (Ex. xxv. 40).

Nor should it be forgotten with what tenacity the Arab tribes to this day, in their monotonous desert solitudes, without monuments and with few written memorials, hold their family and tribal histories purely in memory, as in living and imperishable books. When the

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*for authenticity of the chapters, in the substantially Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch.*

*Also, in Arab tenacity of tradition.*

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marvels of recollection often exhibited by the squalid tribes yet extant are considered, the possibility, nay, the probability, that the goodly patriarchal line would hold trustworthy traditions of the primeval world, is obvious.

To pass on, however, to the line of examination proposed at the outset (§ 4, above, at the end):

## I. TESTIMONY OF SECULAR HISTORIANS.

1. *Lenormant.*

§ 26. *French writer.*

§ 26. One of the most recent books on ancient history comes from France. It is: "The Beginnings of History," by François Lenormant. It consists largely of these chapters, with comments upon them.

2. *Ewald.*

§ 27. *German writer:*

§ 27. Ewald of Germany — referred to at such length already, and, as was stated, a historian rather than a theologian — regards the Hebrew traditions respecting the prehistoric period, the

purest and most trustworthy in existence. For example, speaking of the tradition of four ages of the world he says: "The Hebrew story presents the most conspicuous fragments of it, and lends us the most aid in inferring its original shape." It "possesses this superior merit, that it accurately distinguishes and bounds the four ages according to their intrinsic nature, so that we see clearly why four — neither more nor less — are assumed, how each of them differs intrinsically from the rest, and has its meaning only in its own place and order."

### 3. *Henry and George Rawlinson.*

§ 28. In England the brothers, Henry and George Rawlinson, who have rendered high service in the treatment of ancient history — the former particularly in deciphering ancient oriental inscriptions, the latter in his historical treatises — center ancient history at these chapters. Henry Rawlinson pronounces the genealogical table in Gen-

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§ 28. *English writers.*

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*The chapters variously understood, but regarded as among the most precious memorials of antiquity.*

esis x., for example, "undoubtedly the most authentic record we possess for the affiliation of those branches of the human race which spring from the triple stock of the Noahchidæ."

In an age when all historical records are being put to the most crucial tests, these examples of the deference paid to the chapters under consideration by recent historians, are significant. These historians have their own way of understanding the chapters; and, in some instances, regard them as symbols of history, rather than as history itself: but they agree in soberly ranking them among the most precious memorials of antiquity.

## II. EXTERNAL TESTIMONY.

§ 29. *An inquiry from the outside proposed.*

§ 29. The chapters in question must next be tested as it were from the outside, in respect to the main facts set forth in them. Are those facts — summarized at the outset (§ 1, above) — credible when judged independently?



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1. *Creation.*

§ 30. And, first, the account of the creation. Considering the creative days to stand for periods, which is allowable, the record is strikingly in accord with the testimony of geology. Professor Dana writes: "The Bible says that man was the last creation; geology says the same. The Bible says that quadrupeds next preceded man; geology says the same. The Bible says that inferior animal species, up to reptiles, were created before quadrupeds; geology says the same. The Bible says that there was, earlier, an age without animal life; geology does the same. The Bible says that after the earth had been long in formation (for its three days), the sun, moon, and stars appeared in the heavens. Geology makes this event long after the earth's beginning; and it may be shown to be probable, though not actually demonstrated, that this occurred after the earliest dry land appeared. The Bible says that vege-

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§ 30. *Account of the creation — its substantial accord with science.*

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tation was created with the first appearance of land, before animal life. Science gathers but indistinct records from the earth on this point, yet plainly has no counter statement; and as far as there are any indications, they favor the above. The Bible says the world had a beginning; geology, by its very system of progress, points to a beginning" (*Bibliotheca Sacra*, xx. 386).

2. *Man's First Condition — The Fall.*

§ 31. *Account of man's first condition and of the fall — wide support of both from tradition.*

§ 31. There is here the question of the unity of the race, which will be taken up later (§ 34, below). There is here also that double matter — man's first condition, and his lapse from the same. The general tradition of a remote "golden age," is in harmony with the one; the detailed tradition, varying among different peoples, but involving with greater or less uniformity something eaten, a serpent, a deliberate act, and subsequent misery — is in harmony with the other. Greece, Persia, Thibet,

India, China, Mexico, present traces of such traditions (*Bibliotheca Sacra*, xx. 392-394).

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3. *The Flood.*

§ 32. The traditions of this event constitute one of the most startling phenomena of history. When one of the early missionaries to the Sandwich Islands, in preaching, gave an account of Noah and of the flood, the natives said, that an account had come down to them of a general inundation, and that two men escaped it on a small emerging point of a mountain; but the particulars given by the missionary they had not heard (*Bibliotheca Sacra*, xxii. 418). This strange corroboration of the flood from an island of the Pacific, is only one of multitudes of testimonies from the old world, and from the new, and from the islands of the sea, representing a score or more of peoples. And although, as in the instance cited, the traditions are often imperfect, yet a close student of the subject has ob-

§ 32. *The flood—an almost universal tradition.*

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§ 33. *The confusion of tongues: The Plains of Shinar a linguistic focus. Testimony of Assyrian tablets.*

served, that "there is scarcely a single feature in the Biblical account which is not discovered in one or several of these traditions."

4. *The Confusion of Tongues.*

§ 33. This catastrophe, which scattered the recovering race every whither, is also amply confirmed. There are strong reasons for believing the Aborigines of America to have been of Asiatic origin. Bunsen says, "that two imperishable records, language and mythology," assign the origin of the historical races to Central Asia. Henry Rawlinson affirms, "that if we were to be guided by the mere intersection of linguistic paths, and independently of all reference to the Scriptural record, we should be led to fix on the plains of Shinar as the focus from which the various lines had radiated." Traditions bearing upon items of the Biblical narrative, have come down from Egyptian, Greek, Mexican, and other sources; but — as

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might be expected — those most significant are from the country which the Scriptures represent as the scene of the catastrophe. Without presenting details of these last, the following rendering from mutilated Assyrian tablets brought to England by the late George Smith, of the British Museum, may be cited: "The thoughts of men's hearts were evil, so that the father of the gods turned from them. Babylon had corruptly turned to sin, and set about building a great Tower. Small and great mingled at the task, raising the mound. This they did all the day, raising up their stronghold; but in the night the god Anu entirely made an end of it. In his anger, also, he poured out before the gods his secret counsel to scatter them abroad, and set his face against them, and for this end gave a command to make strange their speech, and thus hinder their progress. Numanzir — the god of confusion — having gone down, they violently resisted him, but he cast them to the earth when

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they would not stop their work " (Hours with the Bible, i. 283, 284).

5. *Origin and Distribution of the Nations.*

§ 34. Two points here :

§ 34. Respecting the account given of the origin and distribution of the earliest tribes and nations, two points claim attention:

1. *Traditional and scientific testimony to the unity of the race ;*

1. The question of the unity of the race — for convenience' sake deferred to be touched upon here. This is the voice of tradition, Max Müller testifying: "As far as I know, there has been no nation upon the earth, which, if it possessed any traditions on the origin of mankind, did not derive the human race from one pair, if not from one person." It is also the voice of a wide range of anatomical and physiological facts, as many of the ablest physiologists bear witness.

2. *High tributes to Gen. x. and xi. as a record of race distribution.*

2. Secondly, the question of the trustworthiness of the accounts given of the distribution of the race. Henry Rawlinson has been cited in another con-

nection (§ 28, above) as testifying to the importance of Genesis x. as bearing on the several lines of Noah's descendants. Ritter, the geographer, says, "that there are no ancient writings which the modern researches in history and geography so fully confirm as" the "eleventh chapter of Genesis and the works of Herodotus." Such being the testimonies to Genesis x., xi., it is reasonable to give the other allusions to this subject in the chapters a like credit.

### 6. *The Genealogical Chronology.*

§ 35. There is left only one other principal matter — the way the chapters in question are put within definite time-limits by a chronology in genealogical form.

1. Respecting the general limitation of the antiquity of man to a short chronology which this matter — according to the ordinary interpretation — involves, it is to be observed that such work as Professor G. Frederick Wright is doing in observing glacial and other deposits,

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§ 35. *Two points here also :*

1. *Scientific evidence of a limited antiquity of man ;*

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tends to fix the first traces of man upon the earth much nearer to the supposed Biblical period than science has been wont to claim.

2. *The long lives of the patriarchs obscure.*

2. Respecting, on the other hand, the long-lived lineage from Adam to Abraham, there are no clear tests to apply. (See, however, § 38, below, at the end.)

This twofold and least clear topic of the chapters can certainly, without reflection on the authenticity of the record, be left for further light.

### III. INTERNAL EVIDENCE.

§ 36. *Importance of internal evidence.*

§ 36. The authenticity of no record is established unless it bears within itself evidences of trustworthiness. Where records have to do with matters remote and obscure, these evidences are often the most conclusive which can be furnished. An examination of the internal evidences of authenticity afforded by these chapters, should constitute, therefore, a leading division of the present inquiry.



An article entitled "The First Eleven Chapters of Genesis Attested by their Contents," which the late Professor Hackett translated from the German of Auberlen and published with annotations in the *Bibliotheca Sacra* for July, 1865 — presents this part of the subject with admirable brevity, penetration, and suggestiveness. The point of view is broad and philosophical.

Nor can too much well be said in praise of the late Professor Tayler Lewis' additions to Lange on these chapters — as bearing on this part of the subject. All the positions taken may not be tenable; but the point of view is that of a seer — acute as a Greek oracle, deep-seeing as a Hebrew prophet.

§ 37. A part of the internal evidence lies in the form of the narrative. Its great simplicity, purity, and dignity; the sharp contrast which marks it, when laid side by side with the noblest forms of collateral tradition; the man-

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*Auberlen on this part of the subject.*

*Tayler Lewis.*

§ 37. *Internal evidence from the form of the narrative.*

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ner in which it is content to leave the mysterious and seemingly incredible, without toning it down, and without trying to explain it — these are some of the marks of a record of facts; of facts apprehended simply and clearly in their real relations; and of facts so profoundly impressing themselves upon a line of serious men, as to be held in tradition clear and unmixed, like bars of gold and inestimable jewels transmitted from generation to generation.

§ 38. *Internal evidence from the matter of the narrative.*

§ 38. Another part of the internal evidence lies in the matter of the narrative. Everything in it is weighty. There is not one trivial line. The profoundest themes are successively under treatment, and a purely original light irradiates them all. There is more science — clothed in popular language — in Genesis i., than the scientists of all the ages have searched out. There is more theology, than all the chairs of dogmatics have expounded. And so it is from chapter to chapter. Intelligently read, they impress themselves

upon the consciousness as true—for example, the deep significance of those three catastrophes, the fall, the flood, the confusion of tongues. When one reads the blessed and prophetic marvel of Acts ii. 1-11, that baleful marvel of Genesis xi. 1-9, is seen to have an indissoluble relation to it. And who shall say but the primeval longevity, over which so many stumble, had its roots not in physiology alone, but in a psychological need, to the end that men should come to have some adequate consciousness of duration and of race-solidarity?

§ 39. "Ah, the philosophical wits must have so much trouble about the swaddling bands of our race and must be ashamed of them; must wish the waters of the flood had swept them away, or at least left them to appear only in the juggler's commentary. And yet ye are, dear, oldest, and eternal traditions of my race, kernel and germ of its most hidden history! Without you, mankind would be what so much else is, a book

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§ 39. *Herder on the internal evidence.*

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without title, without first leaves and explanation; with you, our family acquires foundation, stem, and root, back to God and father Abraham. And they are all taken in so simple, child-like a tone, from the mouth of the first tradition among the trees of the eastern land, and are set forth by Moses, so true and one by one, as if he found them there, the echo of eternal times." (Herder, quoted by Auberlen.)

## IV. TESTIMONY OF THE PRE-EXISTENT CHRIST.

§ 40. *Christ's allusions to parts of these chapters.*

§ 40. But one voice of testimony has not yet been heard — the most competent of all — the voice of him who said: "Before Abraham was, I am" (John viii. 58).

Jesus said: "He which made them in the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the twain

shall become one flesh" (Matt. xix. 4, 5; compare Mark x. 6-8).

Jesus said: "That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of Abel the righteous unto the blood of Zachariah son of Barachiah" (Matt. xxiii. 35; compare Luke xi. 50, 51).

Jesus said: "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father it is your will to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and stood not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father thereof" (John viii. 44).

Jesus said: "And as were the days of Noah, so shall be the coming of the Son of man. For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and they knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall be the coming of the Son of man" (Matt.

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xxiv. 37-39; compare Luke xvii. 26, 27).

Thus in these four instances, with their parallel passages, he refers to and authenticates the account of the creation, of the fall and its bloody sequence, and of the flood.

One of the Evangelists traces his genealogy back to Adam, coinciding, except in the single particular already mentioned (§ 23, above, under Number 4), with that genealogical table of the chapters, which is also a chronology. And in other writings of his duly accredited representatives, the creation, Adam and Eve, the fall, Cain and Abel, Enoch, and the flood, are mentioned—all the passages amounting to a considerable number.

*Allusions of Christ's duly accredited representatives, the New Testament writers.*

§ 41. *Futility of attempts to discredit this testimony.*

§ 41. It is true that efforts are frequently made (see § 20, above, under Number 3) to break the force of the New Testament testimony to the authenticity, not of these chapters only, but of the entire Pentateuch. The plea made is, that Christ and the New

Testament writers adapted themselves to the received opinions respecting the Pentateuch, and did not pass judgment upon those opinions.

Such an adaptation in minor particulars is conceivable. But it is not conceivable that unauthentic records, and that mistaken notions about the general "method of God's grace in Israel," should be made the foundation of Christian doctrine (e. g., Mark xii. 26, 27), of Christian duty (e. g., Matt. xix. 4-6), and of the gravest warnings and exhortations (e. g., Matt. xxiv. 37-39, Heb. xii. 14-17, iii. 13-19). And it is not conceivable because such a supposition: (1.) Either assumes an ignorance on the part of Christ and of the New Testament writers which unfits them to teach final truth; (2.) Or assumes—in the most momentous connections—a connivance at error on their part which morally disqualifies them: (3.) While at the same time, and as already suggested (§ 21, above, under Number 4), it is unhistorical and

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unpsychological to root Christianity in misapprehension or in fraud.

## CONCLUSION.

§ 42. *The evidence summarized. Such a narrative not allegorical.*

§ 42. Now, that what — as has been seen — receives such high deference from even the least evangelical secular historians; that what tradition and science unite more and more to confirm the accuracy of; that what is of such sobriety, steadfast seriousness, dignity, and weight, as to authenticate itself; and that what Christ and the New Testament writers grounded more or less of Christianity upon — should be conceived of as true, indeed, but as to any considerable degree allegorical, is solemn trifling. Perhaps the rocks in the successive geological strata are allegorical. Perhaps the remains of prehistoric animals are allegorical. But stratified rock and the fossils of extinct animals are not more a reality in geology, than the contents of these chapters are a reality in history. And



a most eloquent silence, immutability, and unimpeachableness, characterize both. (See, however, § 23, above; compare § 24.)

§ 43. It might also be fairly questioned, as hinted above (§ 18, at the end), whether — ruling out for the moment so much of the proof of the authenticity of these chapters as has been drawn (§ 25, above) from the substantially Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch — these chapters do not of themselves constitute one of the most formidable proofs of the substantially Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch. Ought not the people among whom the contents of these chapters were a cherished hereditary possession, to be expected to have such an intervening history and such a coming history, that the appearance of the Pentateuch among them at an early day would be natural? What is the Pentateuch but these chapters working themselves out?

§ 44. This inquiry has now been pursued throughout the course proposed at

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§ 43. *Such an introduction, considered by itself, a formidable proof of the substantially Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch.*

§ 44. *“Concerning thy testimonies, I*

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*have known of  
old that thou  
hast founded  
them forever."*

the outset — meagerly, indeed, as the occasion has required, but with fidelity; and no uncertain conclusion has been reached.

Verily: "Thou art near, O Lord; and all thy commandments are truth. Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them forever" (Ps. cxix. 151, 152).







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